



Illinois Ethics Matters

March 7, 2016

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Honesty, Integrity, Service

A newsletter from the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies
of the Illinois Governor

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Recent News

The Executive Ethics Commission released the following investigative reports, in addition to the matter discussed below; all four are now on the OEIG website:

- **In re: Department of Human Services (Case #11-00069)** on February 17, 2016
- **In re: Andre Toguem (Case #12-00216)** on February 17, 2016.
- **In re: Jesus Herrera (Case #12-00339)** on February 17, 2016.

OEIG Finds DCEO Mismanaged State Grants



An OEIG investigation found that the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) failed to properly oversee millions in funds issued through its Employment Opportunities Grant Program. ***In re: DCEO (Case No. 10-00016)***. Among the findings, the OEIG noted instances where DCEO did not ensure that grantees had the required capabilities, and did not collect or maintain final grant reports from grantees.

“We found poor oversight, missing paperwork, and other problems in Employment Opportunities Program grants,” said Deputy Inspector General Angela Luning.

In addition, the OEIG cited DCEO’s practice of paying grants in a single lump sum. While not prohibited by statute, this practice frustrated oversight and complicated fund recovery when grantees could not document expenditures.

For example, a \$1.25 million FY2009 grant to We Are Our Brother’s Keeper showed problems almost immediately, but efforts to recover the already-spent state funds were largely unsuccessful. In 2012, We Are Our Brother’s Keeper head Regina Evans was indicted on federal criminal charges.

In its report, which is available on the OEIG website, the OEIG recommended tighter procedures, which DCEO agreed to implement.

Appellate Court Upholds Termination Based on OEIG Investigation

In 2011, the OEIG reported to the Department of Human Services (DHS) that former DHS employee Toria Jones had issued SNAP and TANF benefits on LINK cards to friends and relatives, and had used those LINK cards for personal purchases. (See ***In re: Jones, Case # 08-00494.***)

During the investigation, Ms. Jones had moved from DHS to the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS). HFS discharged Ms. Jones in response to the OEIG report recommending termination. Ms. Jones grieved the termination, arguing in part that the alleged wrongdoing had not occurred at HFS.

Ms. Jones’ grievance wound through the Civil Service Commission, the Sangamon County Circuit Court, and the 4th District Appellate Court, which in February affirmed the termination.

The court ruled unanimously that “Jones’ willingness to violate department policies could easily transfer to her current position.” The court’s ruling in ***Jones v HFS*** is [here](#).